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Public Health Reports

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UNITED STATES.

[Reports to the Supervising Surgeon-General United States Marine-Hospital Service.]

Yellow fever in the South.

A brief synopsis of the occurrence of yellow fever in the South is given as follows :

Beginning with the report of Passed Assistant Surgeon Wasdin of September 3, stating that the situation at Ocean Springs needed investigation, and his detail to proceed to that place and make an investigation in connection with members of the Mobile board of health, and his subsequent report of September 6, stating that an autopsy made by himself on that day confirmed the diagnosis of yellow fever, representatives of the State board concurring, precautions were immediately taken, by the Bureau directing Passed Assistant Surgeon Wasdin to arrange for a cordon, employ necessary help, and turn matters over to Surgeon Murray on his arrival, reporting to him for duty, and to notify the railroad agents until a cordon should be established to sell tickets only to points north of Washington, or points in mountainous districts, and to keep a record of all leaving, with points of their destination, notifying the local authorities.

On the same day, September 6, Passed Assistant Surgeon Oakley, at Savannah, Ga., was directed to proceed to Waynesville, Ga., immediately, and load the camp outfit stored there, ready for shipment to a point 20 miles east of Ocean Springs. He was also directed to ship the disinfecting apparatus stored in Savannah to the same point.

Superintendent Haines of the Louisville and Nashville Railroad was requested to furnish a special train for this purpose.

Surgeons Murray and Carter, and Passed Assistant Surgeon White,

of the Service, and Dr. John Guitéras, formerly an officer of the Service, were directed to proceed immediately to Ocean Springs; Surgeon Murray was directed to assume command of operations at that point, he being notified that the camp outfit at Waynesville had been ordered to a point near Ocean Springs for the purpose of establishing a detention camp. In the meantime, the local authorities had established a cordon of 25 posts around Ocean Springs.

These officers reported at Ocean Springs in due course, and work for the establishment of the camp was immediately inaugurated, Passed Assistant Surgeon White to be in charge of the camp while Surgeon Murray was in command of the entire operations.

Surgeon Carter was directed to make investigations of reported cases at different points, and Acting Assistant Surgeon John Guitéras was employed in the same capacity.

The total number of cases at Ocean Springs September 8, was 2 in a sick list of 40 persons, and 1 case resulting in death was reported from New Orleans, whose illness, it is stated, commenced at Ocean Springs.

Surgeon Murray arrived and assumed command on the 8th instant, followed the same day by Surgeon Carter, Acting Assistant Surgeon. John Guitéras arrived on the morning of the 8th.

Train inspection at the Alabama line was established on the 9th and railroad authorities notified.

On the same day yellow fever was reported at Scranton, Miss.; and several suspicious cases in one locality in New Orleans were examined by experts of the Louisiana board of health, train inspection on the Louisiana line having been inaugurated several days previously by the Louisiana board.

On the 10th 6 new cases of sickness were reported by 3 physicians at Ocean Springs.

Surgeon Murray wired September 10: "In company with Wasdin, Haralson, and Marshall, superintendent of the Louisville and Nashville Railroad, I have decided on Fontainebleau, formerly Bellefontaine, for the camp. Superintendent Marshall has ordered camp train to that point and lumber and hands to erect the building. Have rented section house and tool room and a near-by residence. Engaged working train and ordered telegraph office set up. Have sent word to Passed Assistant Surgeon White and Steward Richardson to report there. Water from driven wells. Provisions from Mobile." * * *

Passed Assistant Surgeon Glennan, who has been on west coast of Florida inspection service, reported that he left for Grand Bay (Alabama State line) in accordance with orders.

The suspicious case reported at Scranton was examined by Acting Assistant Surgeon John Guitéras and pronounced yellow fever. He also reported much dengue there.

Surgeon Carter, under the same date, reported a case at Perkinston, Miss., contracted at Ocean Springs. Case was isolated and necessary pre-

cautions taken. No other case in that town. The case reported at Scranton was reported to be in the city limits of Pascagoula.

Twelve suspicious cases reported on St. Claude street, New Orleans; no positive diagnosis of yellow fever made; 9 of them, however, recovered; remaining 3 doing well.

On the 11th of September, Acting Assistant Surgeon Gaines, who had been directed to report to Dr. Murray, was ordered to Barkley by permission of Dr. Dunn of the State board because of a report of 5 new cases—1 male and 4 females—though the local physicians had made no report.

Passed Assistant Surgeon Wasdin visited Biloxi, where suspicious cases had been reported.

At the request of the board of health of Louisiana, Assistant Surgeon Norman began the examination of passengers and crews of steamers leaving New Orleans, going up the river.

On the 11th, Passed Assistant Surgeon Young, stationed at Memphis, Tenn., and State health officers of Tennessee, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas were wired as follows: "If fever becomes more prevalent, wider field of operations may be required. Will you wire names of physicians who would accept position to inspect trains on or near State lines (of their respective States), designating names for each place."

Acting Assistant Surgeon Guitéras was directed, after completion of work at Barkley, to proceed at once to Mobile, Ala., for investigation of a suspicious case at that place.

On the 12th, Dr. S. R. Olliphant, president of the board of health of Louisiana, wired: "Commission experts to-day pronounced 7 of the heretofore suspicious cases positively yellow fever."

The services of Dr. Fagét for duty in New Orleans were accepted.

On the 13th, in reply to a telegram from the Bureau of the 7th instant, addressed to Dr. H. H. Haralson, Health Officer, Biloxi, the following was received:

"Replying to yours of 7th instant * * * we beg to say that we have been and are now acting with your Service in our efforts to arrest the spread of yellow fever in our State. We desire to thank you for your proffer of assistance. We are anxiously awaiting the opening of your camp at Fontainebleau, so that we can depopulate the infected towns of our State as quickly as possible. We have about 4,000 people in Biloxi, a large per cent of whom we hope to send to your detention camp as soon as opened.

"H. H. HARALSON, M. D.,
"H. A. GANT, M. D."

Surgeon Carter, under date of the 13th of September, wired from Ocean Springs:

"Four cases yellow fever now at Barkley, 1 developing yesterday; 1 death, Robert Glenn, last night; 1 case malarial fever there, and have been 12 cases of sickness, all told, 10 of which I think are yellow fever and 8 of which I know are yellow fever; 4 deaths, no dengue. Only 4 nonimmune remaining well have been directly exposed; 3 of them

much exposed. I moved these 3 into absolute isolation in noninfected quarters, with Dr. Gaines in charge; the fourth is in a house in the country and is isolated, but not under guard, a source of but little danger now. The physicians who have been exposed are in Scranton and Van Cleave. * * * The 1 at Van Cleave is nonimmune; the 1 in Scranton is Dr. Kells. The infected houses are practically under guard for the present. Guards stationed at the two abandoned houses. Some burning done and some aeration of light fabrics. More will be done by Dr. Gaines, who will stay there some days. The few who are not sick or immune are very anxious to come to camp."

On the 14th of September, Dr. John Guitéras wired from Mobile—

"Have found 1 case of yellow fever at city hospital, Norwegian, who has not been out of city. Probably fatal termination. One suspicious case in addition to one reported yesterday. I apprehend serious outbreak."

All measures have been taken to prevent spread of the disease from this case.

Owing to the condition of affairs another shipment of camp equipage stored at Delaware Breakwater, was placed on cars at this time ready to ship at a moment's notice.

On the same date Passed Assistant Surgeon White reported 1 new case at Barkley.

On the same date, September 14, Dr. Guitéras stated that he had just been shown another case in Mobile which he pronounced without doubt as yellow fever. He was a motorman and no apparent connection with other cases.

Upon request of Drs. J. H. Purnell and J. F. Hunter, executive committee, Mississippi State board of health, Dr. Guitéras was sent to Edwards, Miss., to examine some cases of suspected fever. A special train was furnished him for this purpose by the Board.

An additional 200 tents were ordered from St. Louis to be shipped immediately to Memphis, Tenn., ready for use if it became necessary.

Dr. C. M. Drake, of Atlanta, Ga., was requested to wire names of reliable physicians, one for each crossing, to inspect trains on roads entering Georgia from Alabama.

Surgeon Carter was directed to proceed to New Orleans for inspection service.

Dr. Olliphant, president State board of health, Louisiana, was wired, inquiring whether he proposed to establish a detention camp for New Orleans, and informing him that Fontainebleau would be extended indefinitely for that purpose.

A similar telegram was sent to the State health officer of Alabama.

September 15, Surgeon Carter, at New Orleans, and Passed Assistant Surgeon Glennan, at Mobile, were directed to establish train inspection service, medical inspectors to accompany all passenger trains to the State lines of Georgia, Tennessee, Arkansas, and Texas.

By request of the State board of Mississippi, Acting Assistant

Surgeon John Guitéras was directed to proceed at once to Edwards, Miss., and examine suspicious cases in connection with Dr. Purnell. His report is given in full :

“The diagnosis of yellow fever made in 6 cases by Dr. Purnell is confirmed. He has 2 or 3 cases that I have not yet seen. There are many children sick with what is probably a mild type of the disease. The cases are not confined to one locality, but are all traceable to the Anderson case, which came from Ocean Springs. The medium of distribution appears to have been the Champion case. Mr. Champion, who died, was a prominent man, and many people congregated in the house during the illness. Dr. Purnell is immune, and I recommend him as competent to take charge of situation if necessary. I shall leave this evening at ten for Mobile unless otherwise directed.”

A later dispatch states that 5 additional cases were discovered at Edwards, and it was ascertained that Mrs. Anderson, the first case, took sick on the 8th of August, the date of her arrival from Ocean Springs. All in the house took sick afterwards on different dates, and Mr. Champion on the 29th, two days after visiting the Anderson people.

Dr. Guitéras was directed to notify the State board of health and place Dr. Purnell in charge on behalf of the Bureau unless State authorities had acted. Subsequently State board notified Bureau that they had placed Dr. Purnell in charge some days previously.

At the request of the State board Dr. Guitéras was directed to stop en route back to Mobile at Pelahatchee, which was later countermanded at request of board on report of no sickness at Pelahatchee.

There were no new cases reported from Mobile.

The board of health of Atlanta, Ga., has thrown open its gates to all yellow fever districts.

Table of cases and deaths from yellow fever in the United States as reported to the Supervising Surgeon-General, United States Marine-Hospital Service, to September 15, 1897.

States.	Cities.	Date.	Cases.	Deaths.
Alabama	Mobile.....	Sept. 13	1	.....
		Sept. 14	2	.....
Louisiana.....	New Orleans.....	Sept. 8	.....	1
		Sept. 12	7	.....
		Sept. 13	3	.....
		Sept. 14	5	.....
Mississippi.....	Barkley	Sept. 13	8	4
		Sept. 14	1	.....
	Biloxi	(*)	22	.....
	Edwards.....	Sept. 15	12	.....
	Ocean Springs.....	Sept. 8	4	.....
		Sept. 13	1	.....
	Pascagoula.....	Sept. 10	1	.....
		Sept. 14	1	.....
	Perkinston.....	Sept. 10	1	.....

* To September 15.